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Piracy: Past, present and future

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Abstract

After a brief historical overview, the author examines the definition of piracy. There are problems with this as definition differs under municipal and international law, and the latter gives rise to two interpretations. Attempts at codifications are described, from the activities of the League of Nations, through the Harvard Research Draft of 1932 to the Geneva Convention on the High Seas in 1958 and the 1982 Law of the Sea Convention. Examples are given of types of piracy, including the seizing of yachts, violence against boat people and political piracy. Possible legal responses to piracy are discussed.



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